

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1           1.       A method for workforce procurement and management using a  
2 hosted network application, the method comprising:  
3               maintaining a plurality of modules accessible at varying levels to  
4 different participants in a workforce procurement and management process, the  
5 modules comprising,  
6               an exchange module comprising a search function;  
7               a skills fulfillment module comprising,  
8               a skills requirement function for specifying skills  
9 required for a project; and  
10              a settlement function for tracking expenditures on a  
11 project;  
12              resource management module comprising a work journal  
13 function for collecting information about the activity of an individual  
14 contractor;  
15              a knowledge management module comprising a reporting  
16 function and an analysis function; and  
17              maintaining a database coupled to the plurality of modules.

1           2.       The method of claim 1, wherein the exchange module further  
2 comprises:  
3              a sourcing function for specifying sourcing preference and rules for a  
4 project; and  
5              a transaction management function for managing a hiring process  
6 including sourcing, interviewing, and negotiation.

1           3.       The method of claim 1, wherein the skills fulfillment module  
2 further comprises:  
3              a request for proposal (RFP) function for entering an RFP;  
4              a work order function for documenting terms and conditions of a  
5 project;

6 a purchase order function for generating a purchase order in response to  
7 an approved work order;

8 a logistics management function for facilitating the logistical  
9 components of a hiring process including management of blood testing,  
10 badging, and facilities;

11 a fulfillment management function for managing the fulfillment of  
12 sourcing requirements, including maintaining a status of sourcing requirements.

13 a risk management function for facilitating the pre-qualification of a  
14 contractor and a consultant and for monitoring compliance with government  
15 rules and regulations.

1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the resource management  
2 module further comprises an expense reporting function.

1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality of modules further  
2 comprises:

3 a supply management module comprising a supplier network function  
4 and a digital portfolio function;

5 a supplier workbench module comprising a supplier workbench  
6 function; and

7 a common functions module comprising:

8 an administration function;

9 a workflow function;

10 a catalog function; and

11 an agreements function.

1 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the different participants include  
2 a contractor who is an individual contingent worker, a client who is an  
3 employee of an enterprise, a recruiter who sells a service of finding contingent  
4 workers, and a staffing supplier who sells a service of finding contingent  
5 workers, including finding multiple contingent workers to staff a project.

1 7. The method of claim 6, wherein the participant includes a  
2 contractor, a staffing supplier, and a recruiter, and wherein the predetermined

3 criteria includes a list of staffing suppliers, and a list of skills, and wherein the  
4 predetermined criteria are generated by the analysis function.

1 8. The method of claim 7, wherein the different participants have  
2 varying levels of access to the hosted network application based upon attributes,  
3 wherein attributes include personal attributes associated with a participant, and  
4 enterprise attributes associated with an enterprise using the hosted network  
5 application.

1 9. The method of claim 1, wherein the work journal function  
2 comprises:  
3 the contractor entering data into a work journal data entity, wherein the  
4 entered data comprises,  
5 hours worked;  
6 type of work done; and  
7 comments regarding work done;  
8 a client who is a manager reviewing the work journal data entity;  
9 the manager approving the work journal data entity; and  
10 the manager entering comments into the work journal data entity.

1 10. The method of claim 5, wherein the digital portfolio function  
2 comprises:  
3 populating a digital portfolio data entity with data extracted from an  
4 electronic resume;  
5 populating the digital portfolio data entity with data from systems  
6 external to the hosted network application; and  
7 automatically updating the digital portfolio data entity with data from  
8 the work journal data entity.

1 11. The method of claim 1, wherein the search function comprises;  
2 performing a search for a contractor based upon predetermined criteria  
3 entered by a participant;  
4 performing a search for a contingent position based upon predetermined  
5 search criteria entered by the participant;

6           searching the database, including searching a plurality of digital  
7 portfolio data entities; and  
8           searching a plurality of public databases that are not part of the hosted  
9 application.

1           12.     The method of claim 3, wherein the work order function  
2 comprises;  
3           a participant generating a work order based upon a successful search for  
4 a contractor;  
5           at least one participant reviewing the work order at least one level in  
6 order to determine whether to approve the work order;  
7           if the work order is not approved, returning the work order to a level  
8 below the level at which it was not approved; and  
9           collecting data regarding the work order, approval, and failure to  
10 approve in the database, wherein the knowledge management module accesses  
11 the collected data.

1           13.     The method of claim 12, wherein the work order function further  
2 comprises associating a purchase order with the work order when the work  
3 order is approved.

1           14.     The method of claim 1, wherein the settlement function  
2 comprises:  
3           submitting the approved work journal of a contractor to a staffing  
4 supplier associated with the contractor;  
5           generating an invoice;  
6           submitting the invoice to the manager for approval;  
7           is the invoice is approved submitting the invoice to accounts payable for  
8 processing;  
9           storing data regarding the settlement function in the database, wherein  
10 the knowledge management module accesses the stored data.

1           15.     The method of claim 3, wherein the request for proposal function  
2 comprises:

3 receiving a request for proposal including a list of required contingent  
4 workers and their associated skills;  
5 linking the request for proposal with a project specification that includes  
6 data regarding a project to be staffed;  
7 generating a search based upon the request for proposal and the project  
8 specification, wherein the search uses the exchange module;  
9 broadcasting at least part of the request for proposal to publicly  
10 accessible applications;  
11 receiving responses to the request for proposal;  
12 conducting bargaining based upon responses to the request for proposal  
13 including auctions and reverse auctions.

1 16. The method of claim 1, wherein the reporting function comprises  
2 generating at least one report using data including data generated by the  
3 plurality of modules and stored in the database.

1 17. The method of claim 1, wherein the analysis function comprises:  
2 automatically performing an analysis of at least one report based upon  
3 criteria selected by a participant; and  
4 the participant changing at least one attribute based upon a review of the  
5 analysis.

1 18. The method of claim 1, wherein the hosted network application  
2 is hosted on the Internet.

1 19. A system for workforce procurement and management using a  
2 hosted network application, comprising:  
3 a plurality of web servers for hosting a workforce procurement and  
4 management application;  
5 at least one database server;  
6 at least one database for storing a plurality of data including the  
7 workforce procurement and management application, wherein the workforce  
8 procurement and management application includes a plurality of modules

9 accessible at varying levels to different participants in a hosted workforce  
10 procurement and management process, the modules comprising,  
11 an exchange module comprising a search function;  
12 a skills fulfillment module comprising,  
13 a skills requirement function for specifying skills  
14 required for a project; and  
15 a settlement function for tracking expenditures on a  
16 project;  
17 resource management module comprising a work journal  
18 function for collecting information about the activity of an individual  
19 contractor;  
20 a knowledge management module comprising a reporting  
21 function and an analysis function; and  
22 maintaining a database coupled to the plurality of modules.

1 20. The system of claim 19, wherein the exchange module further  
2 comprises:  
3 a sourcing function for specifying sourcing preference and rules for a  
4 project; and  
5 a transaction management function for managing a hiring process  
6 including sourcing, interviewing, and negotiation.

1 21. The system of claim 19, wherein the skills fulfillment module  
2 further comprises:  
3 a request for proposal (RFP) function for entering an RFP;  
4 a work order function for documenting terms and conditions of a  
5 project;  
6 a purchase order function for generating a purchase order in response to  
7 an approved work order;  
8 a logistics management function for facilitating the logistical  
9 components of a hiring process including management of blood testing,  
10 badging, and facilities;

11 a fulfillment management function for managing the fulfillment of  
 12 sourcing requirements, including maintaining a status of sourcing requirements.  
 13 a risk management function for facilitating the pre-qualification of a  
 14 contractor and a consultant and for monitoring compliance with government  
 15 rules and regulations.

1 22. The system of claim 19, wherein the resource management  
 2 module further comprises an expense reporting function.

1 23. The system of claim 19, wherein the plurality of modules further  
 2 comprises:

3 a supply management module comprising a supplier network function  
 4 and a digital portfolio function;

5 a supplier workbench module comprising a supplier workbench  
 6 function; and

7 a common functions module comprising:

8 an administration function;

9 a workflow function;

10 a catalog function; and

11 an agreements function.

1 24. The system of claim 19, wherein the different participants  
 2 include a contractor who is an individual contingent worker, a client who is an  
 3 employee of an enterprise, a recruiter who sells a service of finding contingent  
 4 workers, and a staffing supplier who sells a service of finding contingent  
 5 workers, including finding multiple contingent workers to staff a project.

1 25. The system of claim 24, wherein the participant includes a  
 2 contractor, a staffing supplier, and a recruiter, and wherein the predetermined  
 3 criteria includes a list of staffing suppliers, and a list of skills, and wherein the  
 4 predetermined criteria are generated by the analysis function.

1 26. The system of claim 25, wherein the different participants have  
 2 varying levels of access to the hosted network application based upon attributes,





1           30.     The system of claim 21, wherein the work order function  
2 comprises;  
3           a participant generating a work order based upon a successful search for  
4 a contractor;  
5           at least one participant reviewing the work order at least one level in  
6 order to determine whether to approve the work order;  
7           if the work order is not approved, returning the work order to a level  
8 below the level at which it was not approved; and  
9           collecting data regarding the work order, approval, and failure to  
10 approve in the database, wherein the knowledge management module accesses  
11 the collected data.

1           31.     The system of claim 30, wherein the work order function further  
2 comprises associating a purchase order with the work order when the work  
3 order is approved.

1           32.     The system of claim 19, wherein the settlement function  
2 comprises:  
3           submitting the approved work journal of a contractor to a staffing  
4 supplier associated with the contractor;  
5           generating an invoice;  
6           submitting the invoice to the manager for approval;  
7           is the invoice is approved submitting the invoice to accounts payable for  
8 processing;  
9           storing data regarding the settlement function in the database, wherein  
10 the knowledge management module accesses the stored data.

1           33.     The system of claim 21, wherein the request for proposal  
2 function comprises:  
3           receiving a request for proposal including a list of required contingent  
4 workers and their associated skills;  
5           linking the request for proposal with a project specification that includes  
6 data regarding a project to be staffed;

7 generating a search based upon the request for proposal and the project  
 8 specification, wherein the search uses the exchange module;  
 9 broadcasting at least part of the request for proposal to publicly  
 10 accessible applications;  
 11 receiving responses to the request for proposal;  
 12 conducting bargaining based upon responses to the request for proposal  
 13 including auctions and reverse auctions.

1 34. The system of claim 19, wherein the reporting function  
 2 comprises generating at least one report using data including data generated by  
 3 the plurality of modules and stored in the database.

1 35. The system of claim 19, wherein the analysis function comprises:  
 2 automatically performing an analysis of at least one report based upon  
 3 criteria selected by a participant; and  
 4 the participant changing at least one attribute based upon a review of the  
 5 analysis.

1 36. The system of claim 19, wherein the hosted network application  
 2 is hosted on the Internet.

1 37. An electromagnetic medium containing executable instructions  
 2 which, when executed in a processing system, cause the system to perform  
 3 workforce management, wherein performing workforce procurement comprises:  
 4 receiving a staffing requirement for a projects;  
 5 searching a database of digital portfolios to find at least one suitable  
 6 contractor for the project;  
 7 filling the staffing requirement with the at least one contractor; and  
 8 automatically updating a digital portfolio of the at least one contractor  
 9 using data entered by the at least one contractor and at least one supervisor of  
 10 the at least one contractor.

1 38. The electromagnetic medium of claim 37, wherein performing  
 2 workforce management further comprises maintaining a work journal for the at

3 least one contractor, including automatically updating work journal, using data  
4 input by the at least one contractor and at least one supervisor of the at least one  
5 contractor regarding job performance of the at least one contractor.

1 39. The electromagnetic medium of claim 38, wherein performing  
2 workforce management further comprises generating payments to the at least  
3 one contractor and to third parties using data from the work journal and invoice  
4 data entered by a manager.

1 40. The electromagnetic medium of claim 39, wherein performing  
2 workforce management further comprises generating reports regarding the  
3 project using data from the work journal.

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